

Volume 1 / September 2017

K I N T S U G I

First Magazine to Emerge From Mastodon Collaborations



Fiction
Science Fiction
Environment
Poetry
Culture
Art
Current Affairs
Wellbeing
Technology
Photography

Photo: Erdal Ozdemir

Kintsugi

Volume 1

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Table of Contents

KINTSUGI

Volume 1
September 2017



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02	Volume 1 Details	18	Poetry
04	Kintsugi's Mission	20	Environment: Renewable Energy Market
05	Editor's Foreword	24	Current Affairs: Chaos in Education
06	Contributors	26	Current Affairs: A Global Transition in Power
07	Wellbeing: The Skilful Use of Opposites	29	Culture: Reclaiming Cinematic Masterpieces
08	Culture: Questions for a Circus Performer	30	Art: Stories Through Photographs
13	Fiction: Castles Beneath The River	32	Technology: Banking & Blockchain
16	Science Fiction: The Plot		

Kintsugi's Mission

Our mission is to bring people together. Kintsugi borrows its name from the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery to give it a new lease of life. The philosophy behind this has its roots in the Wabi-Sabi tradition, which sees existence as imperfect, incomplete and impermanent; instilling a sense of appreciation, acceptance and harmony in the way we live and interact with nature and people.

At Kintsugi, we celebrate the diversity of people and ideas. The Kintsugi magazine covers a diverse set of themes and ideas. We celebrate the value of goodness and the broken lines in each one of us, akin to repaired pottery. We believe that everyone has a stake in the world and everyone matters.

Kintsugi is a project organised and put together through social media, mainly the Mastodon network. The contributors have not met in person or face to face. Our aim here was to show that people can do good and put together something unique and different. We want to encourage others to come forward and do the same.

Erdal Ozdemir
Editor



Editor's Foreword

There are many enduring questions of our times, often without a clear-cut answer. A wise person had once said that living is an art and requires boundless courage. Some of those questions however have definitive answers, for example a recent dilemma that challenges some of the leading intellectuals is whether it is acceptable to punch Nazis in the face. Wisdom teaches us that not only it is acceptable to punch Nazis in the face, but it is an obligation of every decent citizen.

Another enduring question of our times is whether anything good can ever come out of social media; and the answer to that is "yes". Kintsugi is a project organised and put together through social media, mainly the Mastodon network.

I first had an idea of publishing a culture magazine in my student days when almost all publications were in print. The cost, my lack of network and multiple other challenges made the project impossible at the time. Today the world is a different place, and we can make it whatever we want it to be. I send my gratitude and commendation to the contributing writers for making this project possible.

*"All around no flowers in bloom,
Nor maple leaves in glare,
A solitary fisherman's hut alone,
On the twilight shore,
Of this autumn eve."*

Fujiwara no Teika

Contributors

Algot Runeman

Badr Berrada

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Eylul Dogruel

Lucile Peyre

Maria do Carmo Grünewald Branco

Mathilde Fraisse

Risa Stephanie Bear

Russ Sharek

Tim Rowe

Photo: Annie Spratt

WELLBEING: THE SKILFUL USE OF OPPOSITES

Tim Rowe

There's a saying that's been around for so long, that it's almost a cliché: *"What you resist, persists"*.

We love all the good stuff in our lives, but have a seeming need to get rid of all the bad stuff.

Our thinking about ourselves often reflects this too:

"If only I weren't so ..."

"I should be more ..."

"I shouldn't be ..."

We imagine that if could somehow fix these broken or lacking aspects of ourselves, our lives would improve.

But what if we aren't broken and we don't need fixing?

What if we were able to adopt a kinder approach to ourselves, and embrace our seeming shortcomings? No more striving. No more endless and expensive therapy sessions. No more wasting money and time on the latest self-help craze or book.

We live in a world of opposites – and we often welcome the good but avoid or resist the bad. But right down the middle (or better put for this analogy, at the top) of these opposites or polarities, there is what I call a "fulcrum point". This point is beyond duality and is neither "good" nor "bad".

It has been called many things by various traditions: Self, Atman, Awareness, Soul. But for the purposes of this article, I'm going to stick with the more neutral term "Awareness".

Does this mean that we won't experience these opposites anymore? That they'll magically disappear from our experience? No! But it does mean that the degree of emotional charge will have gone, leaving us free to experience life which is less conflicted and more stress-free.

What does often happen, is that from the fulcrum point, previously unseen opportunities appear in our lives due to us no longer being resistant to "what is".



Tim Rowe is a musician and artist based in London. Tim is an explorer of psychology, spirituality and eastern philosophy and mediation. He is also a teacher of Yoga Nidra. He can be reached on his [website](#) and [mastodon](#).

CULTURE: QUESTIONS FOR A CIRCUS PERFORMER

Russ Sharek

In a virtual interview where the questions were crowdsourced on the Mastodon Network, Russ Sharek shares with us his life as a circus and theatrical clown.



Russ Sharek – Photo : Kent Barker

Question (@RunningInCircles):

So there are often certain traits, clues and markers that help you identify the passion of a person. As I sit drinking coffee at an airport, watching people go by I can spot certain things. I've become adept at spotting those that are climbers, runners, explorers by the way they move and the things they wear. But out of the "uniform of a clown", what would be the tell tale clues to spotting one outside of their natural environment?

Our circus actively uses the hashtag #clownspotting for social media posts, so I found this question ironically spot on. I'll accept the challenge and attempt to answer the age old question of how you spot a clown incognito.

The most honest description of clowns I've heard came from a friend's toddler. She was attempting to explain why she liked clowns. Wise beyond her years, she declared that, "Clowns are simply more people-y than normal people."

Russ Sharek - Photo : Gomez Bear



I strive to keep that idea close when working. So far it's done wonders to keep me at least somewhat rooted to reality. As I see it, the clown is the everyman, and at their most noticeable they are bringing focus to the genuine absurdity of the human condition.

As that condition tends to vary widely, so do the clowns.

Narrowing that down to fools of professional caliber, I have noticed a few things that stick out:

Clown is, despite its tendency towards philosophy, a physical theatre discipline. As such, its active practitioners tend to be in solid physical form. Even the less athletic clowns I know tend towards having good posture and moving gracefully, often defying their age.

Additionally, clown performers tend to be social creatures. Even the quiet clowns I know are present, charismatic, and full of heart.

If you're looking for an outright physical tell, I suppose you can look for what one of my mentors jokingly referred to as "Clown Stigmata":

In theatrical traditions, the clown nose is considered a sort of mask. It's held on to the wearer's face with string or elastic. Particularly after long performances, the string leaves an



Russ Sharek - Photo : John Grant

impression on the cheeks just below the eyes and across the bridge of the nose.

Interestingly, kids ALWAYS seem to spot us out of costume. They just know.

Question (@timrowe):

I have a very common one I think, Russ: Where does the idea or myth of the "sad, melancholic clown" who hides beneath the makeup/ costume, originate?

If you crack open your clown history books, you'll find references to a comedic performer known as Grimaldi. He was, by all accounts, the father of both the look and performance style which we now think of as clown. He was also, by those same accounts, a wretch of a human being who was prone to fits of depression, madness and other maladaptive personality "quirks" which might now fall under a clinical diagnosis.

This is likely where the seed got planted. Performers (and movies... And Charles Dickens...) riffing on the idea for a few generations simply crystallised it into a trope of popular culture.

An additional thing that comes into play is that, from what I've seen, people have difficulty processing the idea of one end of any spectrum

CULTURE: QUESTIONS FOR A CIRCUS PERFORMER

without considering the other. If a clown takes the stage with joy, we feel compelled to assume they are miserable when they go backstage. When we see someone play the villain, we desperately want to tell stories about how nice the actor is out of character.

Geniuses and creatives have always been known for having extreme personalities when compared to social and societal norms, and I suspect clowns (who are a bit of both) are no different. What we are truly seeing is the human condition under magnification. Clowns get happy, just like people. Clowns get sad, just like people. It's the theatrical lens that makes it seem extreme in most cases.

I always find myself returning to what that toddler said. If clowns are "more people-y than people," they possess both the best and the worst of what the human experience has to offer.



Russ Sharek - Photo : This Show

Question (@timrowe):

And another one: In which way(s), if any, has clowning proved to be a "healing process" for you and, if so, how's that working out?

I've heard it said that the whole of theatre is a form of social validation therapy. Shows are simply a strange ritual of care for an audience, and all the work that goes into getting that ritual on stage is what the performer needed to get

themselves sorted out.

I'll leave it as an exercise for the reader to ponder why performers need so much more therapy than audiences. ;)

From my experience, clown is absolutely a healing process. It formed a mental framework which allowed me to work through a number of fears, traumas and blocks that were getting in the way of my happiness and personal growth.

While the clown persona is in no way a trance or regressive state, it does have an innocence to it which allows me to approach experiences with a fresh perspective.

My life story before I found circus arts and performance is, for me, a touchy subject. There's trauma there, both of my own making and from external sources. Finding tools which allow me to both process those experiences in a productive way and leave them at the "edge of the stage" when I need to be fully present is a surprising gift from the red nose.



Russ Sharek - Photo : This Show

CULTURE: QUESTIONS FOR A CIRCUS PERFORMER

Question (@DialMforMara):

What's something you didn't think starting out that you'd ever get used to, that became totally normal?

A large part of my job is to bring the humanity into our circus performances. Even if I've experienced something hundreds of times, it's on me to see the wonder and magic in what we do.

Going into this work, I assumed that meant I had to be an actor. What shocked me was the absolute sacred truth in something one of my mentors said:

"You do the same show every night and it's completely new."

Every performance of every show I've ever been a part of has some moment that is completely unexpected, new, and amazing. Even when there is absolutely no improvisation in the moment, somehow there always seems to be a unique experience happening.

I'm fascinated by this, and have no idea why it's true. It's part of what makes live performance magical, and I never tire of it.

The result of internalising this truth is a sort of calm knowledge that, at some point, the completely unexpected **will** happen. You learn to embrace failures as opportunities, or at least spectacular stories you'll be telling later.

P.S. - If you need a less philosophical answer, I'm writing this while recovering between rehearsals. My tired-to-the-point-of-grumpy initial response was, "All the damned cardio."

Question (@eladhen):

How do you cope with (and how often do you face) blatant clown-hatred?

When I initially sat down to answer this question, I was prepared to qualify my response with an explanation that I had only experienced a handful of edge-case examples

of actual hatred towards me as a clown.

The more I began to think about it, the more I came to realise that I was only counting examples that led to genuine attempts at violence or similarly cruel-intentioned physical confrontations.

The interesting thing about these rare moments is how everyone else reacted. Venues have scrambled to my defence. Audiences have applauded my efforts to defuse situations, my restraint in response, and my willingness to stay in the moment with them afterwards.

It's worth mentioning that I have specific training in crisis management and dealing with these sorts of risky situations. It directly informs how I choose to engage in these moments, and I absolutely do **not** recommend that people go looking for trouble.

The lion's share of the negative reactions I encounter are really about fear.

My soapbox on this topic is fairly direct: Anyone who dresses as a clown with the intent of causing fear is **not** a clown. An attempt to intentionally cause fear is an act of terrorism, and adopting an icon of kindness and laughter to do so borders the perverse.

In a few cases, I've been gentle enough to chip away at some of the fear in this world. It's a thing I'm both proud of and passionate about doing.

If I'm completely honest with myself, I think clowns are an easy target.

We humans seem to have this huge build up of negative emotional energy that needs some sort of steam valve. Given a choice, I'd certainly prefer it to be converted to laughter.

If it has to take the form of negativity, better at me for being weird than someone who doesn't deserve the abuse.

CULTURE: QUESTIONS FOR A CIRCUS PERFORMER

Russ Sharek – Photo : Eric Malmgren



Question (@heyitseric):

So, tell me what it was like being a bargaining chip for the elephant's life and the half ton of un-popped popcorn in the carny mutiny of 2004?

In 2004 I was not yet (formally) a clown, so I have very little first-hand perspective of the mutiny to offer you. What I can tell you is that elephants are smarter than you can possibly imagine, bargaining with clowns is risky business, and popcorn can get wedged places you simply wouldn't believe.



Russ Sharek – Photo : John Grant

Russ Sharek has been described by reliable sources as a zen fool, benevolent super-villain, misanthropic community leader, clown father figure and Impish Cabaret Rasputin. Mr. Sharek prides himself on being a life-long student in the world of theatrical clown, eccentric performance and variety entertainment. He has traveled around the world to study important things like pie throwing and human stupidity with living circus legends. His formal education includes spending time with impressive idiots from the New York Goofs, the Celebration Barn Theatre, SpyMonkey, and the Why Not Institute. When not on tour, Russ splits his time between performing with the Circus Freaks, developing strange bits of physical theatre, and teaching almost everything he knows through the Bath House Cultural Centre and Moxie Mischief Aerial Arts. Follow Circus Freaks [website](#) and Russ on [mastodon](#) for updates.

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FICTION: CASTLES BENEATH THE RIVER

Erdal Ozdemir



Photo: Carissa Gan

Clément sat quietly in front of the house door, whilst the jubilant chants of the playing children were echoing from nearby. He was thinking about the castles his father had once told him.

‘At home there are lots of castles, each from a different era, each rising high above the sky – as a way of declaring their pride – and also their strength against time,’ his father had told him.

He really wanted to see the castles back at home, but he didn’t remember home. He visualised a mighty river with several great bends. The untameable currents of the river were running around castles that stood on small isles, making it impossible to reach them. At the top of the towers of the castles, were illuminating lights. And only the brave were allowed into the castles. He imagined himself walking to the bank of the river to face giant monsters, that swum in the water waiting for the knights that may try to

cross the river to reach the castles. When he stood tall beside the water, the strongest and the largest of all monsters gave out a large cry.

Clément raised his sword which had the inscription ‘protector and grand musketeer of France’ engraved on it. The waters separated, like the way Luc’s father had once told, when he told the story of Moses. A bridge appeared, and rose up from the riverbed. Clément placed his sword back in its sheath and walked across the stone bridge. He looked at the monsters on the sides of the bridge and saw the bewildered look on their faces. He walked closer and closer to the castle.

‘Why aren’t you coming inside?’ Claire asked, opening the door behind Clément, and waking him up from his daydream.

‘I don’t want to.’

FICTION: CASTLES BENEATH THE RIVER

'Then give me your bag and go play with the other kids.'

'They don't want to play with me.'

'Why is that?'

'Because they say...I don't know.'

Claire knelt down; she hugged him firmly and kissed his hair.

'That must be because they are jealous. You must be the most handsome of them,' she said, 'are you hungry dear?'

'Yes, but I don't want to eat now. I will wait for papa to come.'

'Did he promise to come today?'

'No.'

Claire paused and concentrated on a figure that appeared at the end of the street. Clément raised himself and ran towards him as soon as he recognised that it was Guy. Not a trace remained from Guy's pride or etiquette conscious appearance. He didn't have a hat or his long overcoat.

His hair was messy and his beard was overgrown. He looked weak and ill. Clément ran as fast as he could and embraced his father. Guy lifted him into the air and carried him. He kissed his son and Clément hugged him firmly.

'I missed you so much Clément.'

'I missed you too, papa. Do you know there is no more Maréchal? We don't have to sing Maréchal, nous voilà, ever again!'

'It is the end of war; that is why.'

'Really? Has it finished?'

'Yes, and we will return home; back to Tours. Do you know what this means? You will see the castles.'

'Yes! But I don't remember home.'

'Of course, you were a baby when we came here. You will love it there. You will make a lot of friends.'

Claire watched the two most important people in her life while they approached the gate.

'Papa, but how did the war finish? Who won?'

'We won. The conscious of people, their belief in freedom and justice won.'

'I think I should tell Luc about it, before anyone else does.'

'Who is Luc?'

'He is my friend.'

Guy and Clément laughed and when they entered the gate, Claire embraced them both. They went inside the house and had a meal as a family. After the meal Clément located Luc, next to other kids.

'Come, let's play with them, they have a ball,' Luc said excitedly.

'They don't want to play with me.'

'But, why?'

'Because I am too handsome. Besides I have to tell you important things...First take half of this candy...The war is over!'

'Really? How do you know?'

'My father told me.'

'How does he know?'

'Okay, this is another secret...He knows because he is a national hero! I found it out but no one else knows. He fought against the Germans!'

FICTION: CASTLES BENEATH THE RIVER

Clément went on explaining a story where he blended the castles beneath the river and the German armies – and his national hero.

‘There stood, brave Guy, right at the gate of the first castle. The Germans were watching him at the towers with fear. They failed to understand how their monsters in the river couldn’t stop the brave knight. They started firing at him with their giant cannons and machine guns.

The knight disappeared from the view and the clamours of German soldiers echoed throughout the castle. Only equipped with a sword, the knight of consciousness stood stately before the fearful Germans. He defeated the soldiers, one after the other and liberated every castle beneath the river.’

Luc was confused.

‘Don’t tell me, you don’t know the castles,’ Clément exclaimed.

Luc bowed his head with shame and Clément recited what he learned from his father.

‘Chambord is the pillar of architecture, Cheverny an artistic triumph. Chaumonts stands up all mighty on the river and Valençay, like a good blend of wine, matured three centuries and tamed time...’

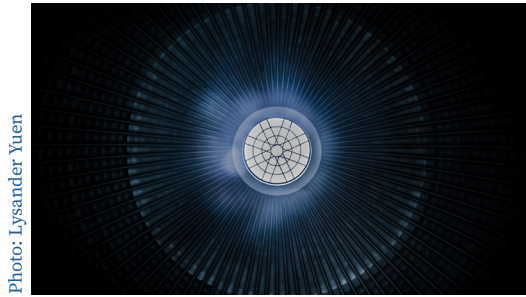
End of excerpt ([Book available on Amazon](#))



Erdal Ozdemir is a writer, researcher and the editor of Kintsugi magazine. His books are available on [Amazon](#). He can be reached on his [website](#), [mastodon](#), or [twitter](#).

SCIENCE FICTION: THE PLOT

Lucile Peyre (Translation: Mathilde Fraisse)



‘The Galactic Empire is lying to you!’

Gelami44 had an artificial voice with a clear and certain tone. Teg and Azalu exchanged a dubious look and focused back on the screen. Why not... after all?

‘Look carefully at this image. It’s the last photograph SIGA released to the public. As you can notice it, it bears the official logo of the Empire at the bottom right along with a number. This number indicates which satellite took the picture with the date and the precise time on it. First, all you need to understand this picture is several months old is to know how to decode this number. Why did they wait so long before releasing it, would you ask? This is the question. And if we look more closely to the device which took this photograph, we understand it has been put together on Ogle, in a factory belonging to Hevelax, the very same firm that makes the soldier-robots for the Emperor. Is this a coincidence? It could be... But let’s admit we have to wonder. Now, look at the image itself.’

Ted and Azalu leaned slightly toward the screen, squinting to better distinguish the details. One could see a man wearing a robe and a pair of socks, picking up his newspaper in front of his house’s front door. This photograph had been

released on SIGA’s website on the previous night. There was nothing really impressive, in theory. It had been admitted for a long time. But the creator of the video seemed to have found something to think about behind this clear evidence.

‘Study carefully the person’s feet. His socks don’t seem to be the same colour. At least, it is what Ja’f Ehorel - SIGA’s communication supervisor - explains on the Agency’s website. Is it a mere error, a morning mix-up? Maybe... But what if the socks were both blue? Why does one of them seem to be black? Look closely at the angle of the feet. If a straight object had been here, the shadow would have had the same effect!’

A small red arrow appeared on the picture to show the spot. As focused on the video as they were, Teg and Azalu squinted a little bit more. The arguments were slowly making their way through their heads.

‘Then, it would have been really easy to erase this object from the picture. But the shadow stays, proving that the picture has been altered. And what kind of straight object could have been in front of this man? The leg of a soldier-robot from the Empire, of course! The very same soldier-robots that are made in the same firm that the satellite which took the picture.

An imperial soldier-robot took the place of the red arrow on the screen, fitting perfectly in the space the arrow had just drawn. Indeed, the shadow of the leg was seen on the left sock. Speechless, Teg and Azalu were beginning to seriously doubt SIGA's statements.

'And if this photograph has been modified at this precise spot, what tells you some other spots hadn't been modified more efficiently? How can we be sure this is real, and not a mere fake?'

All the Emperor had been saying for over a century would be manoeuvring, then? In school, they had studied the very first photographs taken by SIGA in their history books and their teachers had told them the importance of this discovery and of the measures which had followed. But after all, teachers got their wages from the Galactic Empire, as well as the civil servants from the Agency. Could we really confide in them? Should we believe everything they affirmed without question?

'For almost a hundred years, we have been flooded with these images, these so called pieces of proof. And what do they prove? Distance! Remoteness! But this protecting measures give the Emperor a whole planet, I mean, a whole solar system to freely see through his secret

activities. Trade and touristic expeditions and even journalists are forbidden in this particular zone, which keeps growing by the way. Are you sure that over there, the Galactic Empire is not engaged in some forbidden experiments, while protected by ASIG's measures? Some rumours even tell about a secret jail in which the opponents to the Emperor belonging to well-known families are kept prisoners. These prisoners are supposed to have been replaced by clones, so their relatives wouldn't notice their disappearance.

Flights of fancy?! Ramblings?! Is this so hard to believe for you? Harder than the tale the Galactic Empire is telling us? Ask yourself the question!'

Once they were finished watching the video, Teg scratched his head with his third tentacle and Azalu made a nasal grunt, which was a sign he was troubled. They had never really thought about such possibilities before, but what they had just heard made them think. It was true only the Spatial Imperial Galactic Agency was authorised to enter the solar system. Gelami44 might be right. All this story might have been built from A to Z. In fact, it was quite logical. Who could believe such nonsense? The joke was too big, the wires were too noticeable.

They were sure by now that... humans didn't exist!



Lucile Peyre is a Philosophy teacher, in Aveyron, in south of France. She also writes short stories and Sci-Fi novels. Follow her on her [website](#) and on [mastodon](#).



Mathilde Fraisse is an English Teacher, in Aveyron, in south of France. She is also interested in history, culture and heritage due to her previous job as a tour guide.

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POETRY

Risa Stephanie Bear

Some Things Will

*In a garden's grave, life remains: beets
Never pulled may be pulled now, to boil
And put back, for the flock to discover;*

*Greens have carried on and are taken
And dehydrated, or left for the goose to strip;
Red highlights show missed tomatoes;
Dense thickets of dead vines give beans.
Even the weeds, that had defeated her,
Now yield rich heads of seed for hens.
She walks about, coat-wrapped, scanning*

*Ground for spuds rolled out by hen feet.
Rarely, rewardingly, a ripe winter's squash
Awaits discovery. Gone to seed last year,
Viable chard and kale erupt now
Even as it were March, and are welcomed.*

*Little remains of her apple crop,
If the early varieties are to be believed,
Filling the cellar as they have, and
Even the kitchen cabinet, with sealed jars.*

*Rummaging round the orchard, she spies,
Excusing themselves for tardiness, a
Mighty wall of Granny Smiths. She might
Avail herself of them, but her arms ache.
In winter one wants rest. She turns
Now houseward. Her hands hope
Some things will wait for spring.*

Photo: Jason Leung

What Rain is For

*The last three summers, as she recalls them,
Her heavy-clay bit of earth opened hexagonally;
Into the depths she stared, seeing dry darkness
So desiccated, she fancied worms and millipedes*

*In despair had decamped, seeking other worlds.
She poked at crevasses with her stick, finding bottom*

*Well deeper than twelve inches. Not knowing
How to garden in any but a rain forest, she
Attacked books and websites for some scheme
The budget could be stretched for: shade cloths,*

*Raised beds, huge-log hugelkulturs, keyhole beds.
All were possible, but her hands, old, worked
In fits and starts; her money allocated elsewhere.
Now she startles, looking at her night sky, so steeped*

*In stars all summer, finding it black and close.
Some drops, like bad boys' spitballs, carom off her*

*Face. More, and now she's happily drenched in her
Old nightgown, dancing slow circles. Autumn proves
Real at last. This dance is what rain is for.*

Photo: Jason Leung

POETRY

See It Through

*One should not have an orchard and
Not care for it; so she tries,
Even lurches from the depths of a chair*

*She's found at some thrift, pre-softened; from
Her house, warm or cool as she might wish,
Out into too much sun or too much rain; from
Under the kind roof of a porch she'd built,
Leaving tool after tool there to gather
Dust and webs, marks of a new will to*

*Neglect. Beyond the weed-bent fence, an
Orchard of sorts awaits her care, each
Task having skipped two years at least.*

*Hands grasp lopper and saw. She visits
Apple, quince, pear, plum, cherry, clipping
Vines, tall weeds, watersprouts, suckers;
Even designates branches for her stove.*

*As the forenoon warms, she strips off
Now her hat, next jacket, shirt and gloves,*

*Old skin offered to thorns, thistles,
Rough bark. Really she'd meant to hire it
done,
Children of neighbors being short on cash.
Habit, she could call it. Habit, and the way
Apples come best that see right sun,
Ripe enough to pay her for some pains.
Do a thing yourself to see it through.*



Risa Bear farms one acre in the Willamette Valley, Oregon. A former tree planter, forest fire fighter, and timber cruiser, she retired in 2009 after twenty years at the University of Oregon where she earned the M.A. in English and M.S. in Arts Management while working full time. She edited and compiled the pioneering e-text website Renaissance Editions. Her books are available on [Lulu](#). Follow her on [mastodon](#).

ENVIRONMENT: RENEWABLE ENERGY MARKET

Maria do Carmo Grünewald Branco



Photo: Karsten Würth

The world needs the development of infrastructures and improvement of living standards. Ordinary citizens often fail to notice an important resource we use everyday to achieve that: energy. As consumers, most people only want to receive enough energy to plug in their electronic devices, to have light at home and to power workplaces, but never pay attention to how we get energy. So, why do we need to pay attention to renewable energy market? Because technological

advances affect and change energy demand and production.

The renewable energies are types of energy generated by natural sources such as wind, sunlight, rain, geothermal heat, biomass and tides. These alternative origins of energy as opposed to traditional fossil fuels provide us the possibility to produce power through implementation of technological processes.

Types of Renewable Energy

Solar energy is produced by the use of the radiant light and heat of the sun, which is converted to power through use of technologies such as photovoltaic(PV) panels.

Wind energy may be defined as a type of solar energy because wind is formed by the heating up of the Earth's atmosphere. Wind is processed through wind turbines that convert wind to mechanical electricity.

Geothermal energy is the conversion of the heat that resonates from reservoirs of hot water and hot rock inside Earth's crust into energy.

Biomass energy is when organic plant material and animal waste since the beginning of humanity are burnt to keep the environment warm and cook the food and this also is a type of energy, brought now by other technologies.

Tidal energy is when marine current can be used to generate power through the tidal cycles originated by the Moon phases. The electricity generation is achieved by tidal turbines installed underwater in the sea.

Hydroelectric energy is perhaps the most controversial renewable energy is the hydroelectric power because many specialists consider that water is not exactly an inexhaustible source. The hydroelectric power consists in flowing water that is captured and converted into electricity. Small or mini-hydroelectrical plants can be used at ranches, farms or homes.

Renewable Energy Market

Instead of being used solely to achieve a low-carbon economy or avoiding the use of fossil fuels, the use renewable energies are a matter of investing into and using technological advances of the times to produce more efficient and less environmentally damaging energy output.

Since we need energy everyday to do our tasks

and to keep the world working, the possibility to produce energy from our environment in a sustainable way is amazing because it provides us the excellence of future technologies and allows us to produce the energy we need in a way that protects our planet from destruction.

Cities around the world are growing. Farming industry requires more energy and poorer regions in the world need to have the opportunity to develop. Employment of clean energy requires the use of technology. This technology provides us the chance to have smart buildings and cities, which will help the entire societies to live with the guarantee of sustainability.

The renewable energy market is under constant expansion and many nations around the world are developing advanced Technologies to improve the efficiency and use of renewable energies.

China is considered as the world leader in renewable energies, so much so that China is solely responsible for the solar modules getting cheaper. Hydroelectricity (their biggest renewable energy source), solar power, wind power and more recently, efforts in geothermal and biomass energy makes China a true leader in the market. They also have proposals to export energy to Pakistan, Myanmar and India.

Germany generated 35.1% of its electricity by renewable energies in the first half of 2017 and during prolonged times of high winds and sunlight, this number increased to 85%. It is worth remembering that Germany has a commitment to phase out its nuclear power plants by 2022 and also it is helping Zambia with its renewable energy program. The mostly widely used renewable energies in Germany are wind power, biomass, solar power, hydroelectricity and geothermal power.

TYPES OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

*Geothermal
Energy*



Solar Energy



Wind Energy



Hydroelectric Energy



Tidal Energy



Biomass Energy

Photos: Pixabay

ENVIRONMENT: RENEWABLE ENERGY MARKET

USA is third in worldwide leadership in use of renewable energy. California is the leading state with almost 29% of its energy needs supplied by renewable energies. Despite the climate change denial persistent in domestic politics, USA offers good technology in regards to renewable energy production and many companies produce renewable energy for the domestic or industrial demand. Hydroelectric power, solar power, wind power, biomass, geothermal and wave power are examples of renewable energies used in USA. In 2016, 10% of consumed energy was generated by renewable energies in the USA.

The next three leaders in renewable energy are France, Chile and Brazil, which are fourth, fifth and sixth in the world respectively. France produced 19.6% of its domestic use energy by renewable sources in 2016. Chile is developing extensive solar power plants, making important companies to go there. Brazil has massive investments in hydroelectricity, wind power, solar power, biomass and the ethanol (a fuel consisted in sugarcane).

Further Resources

IGA - International Geothermal Association

IHA - International Hydropower Association

IRENA- International Renewable Energy Agency

NREL - National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- U.S. Department of Energy

SEIA - Solar Energy Industries Association

WBA – World Bioenergy Association

WWEA - World Wind Energy Association

UCS - Union of Concerning Scientists

Tesla



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CURRENT AFFAIRS: CHAOS IN EDUCATION

Algot Runeman

Education is mostly an open source business. Children spend their time in and out of classrooms exploring the culture and knowledge of our world. That culture and knowledge is a heritage passed along by parents and educators. Children are encouraged to manipulate the material with comments like, "Practice makes perfect." Of course, the children frequently mangle the stuff they learn. Patient educators and parents adjust the experience for a child and encourage more practice. Over time, support makes children persist until they achieve a level of mastery and move on to the next challenge.

Chaos is inherent in learning. Very few elements of learning are accomplished by a single effort. "Failures" occur on a daily, hourly or even moment-by-moment basis. The business of education is managing the chaos, the setbacks, the productive failures. That's right "productive failures." Instant success isn't normal. Iterative effort supports incremental improvements. Steady improvements lead to confidence and success. Children deserve to have steady support for their explorations, their chaos, their mangling of the current topic. Children need to understand failure the way that open source developers are encouraged to see their own failures. "Release early and often" is a major open source software mantra. Let the process be as transparent as possible.

Submit trial code for others to examine and put through the stress tests of use. Oh, and users, please send back bug reports. Children learn the same way. They submit homework, written assignments, drawings, reports, all the elements of a product. They get evaluation, and they need, next, to be encouraged to push ahead to the next evaluation. Learning isn't a singular accomplishment, it is a series of chaotic early-and-often releases. "Yes, that's great. See if it can be made better. Would it work better if..."

Parents and educators must avoid inserting blockers. "What, you got a C- on the test? **That's unacceptable!**"

Dropping that kind of blocker on a regular basis does NOT encourage children to enjoy the work. Instead, they do what it takes to avoid the "failure." That avoidance may include working to get a C+ if that means a parent or educator will then say, "At least it's not C-." Low grade avoidance is not the same as "release early and often." Avoidance of low evaluations is avoidance of "failure." Avoidance of "failure" frequently also leads to avoiding challenge. Instead of taking the chance to learn calculus, sign up for the consumer math class during high school senior year, for example. The enthusiasm for making improvements is missing. Getting by, avoiding failure, escaping from the hard work, that's the new goal.

Parents and educators have the difficult job of managing chaos. Parents and educators need to carefully tread the path of effective evaluation, effectively encouraging children to keep moving ahead. Children, adolescents, young adults (even adults) need support to encourage them to take the next challenge, one which they can "fail" to finish in version 0.01, ver. 0.3.2, and possibly even version 0.99. Parents and educators cannot be expecting efficiency and productivity from their children. Those are terms of the conservative adult world. Learning is chaotic and messy, not often efficient. Productivity is a term of late-stage business activity. It happens when the job is well understood, probably even repetitive. Now that a worker knows how to make a widget, let's see how much faster it can be done.

Think carefully, adults. Is rote repetition of a well understood skill your actual goal for the education for your children?

Work hard parents. Work hard teachers, principals, superintendents, school boards, legislatures, federal education officials. Keep your focus carefully on educational realities, the chaotic, failure rich, iterative process of releasing early and often and the excitement and joy of getting to the next challenge.

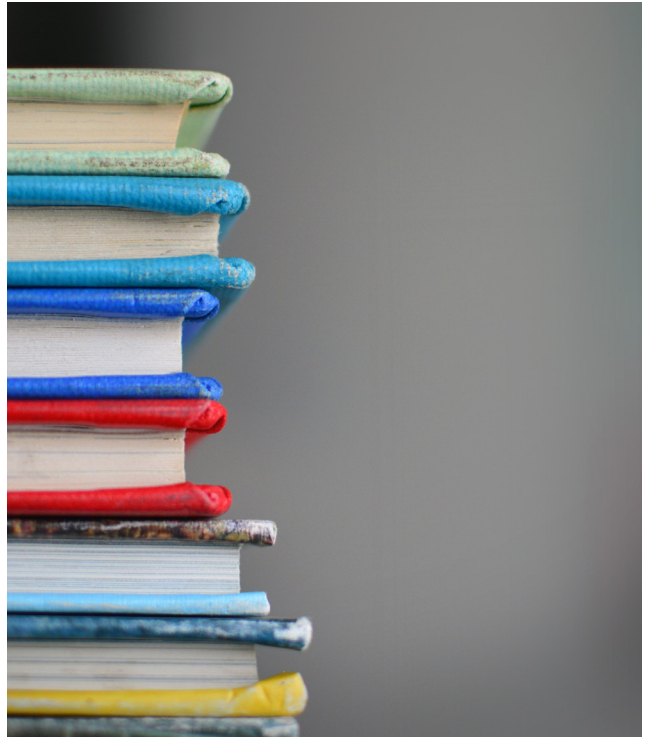


Photo: Kimberly Farmer



Algot Runeman is a retired science teacher and an advocate for software freedom. He can be reached on his [website](#), [mastodon](#) and [twitter](#).



Photo:Faustin Tuyambaze

CURRENT AFFAIRS: A GLOBAL TRANSITION IN POWER

Badr Berrada



Photo: Anthony DELANOIX

A Major Power Shift is Underway

While North Korea was openly defying Washington with a breakthrough ballistic missile test, and US President Donald Trump was embroiled in his usual juvenile tweeting antics, Russia and China's leaders were proudly consolidating their strategic alliance for a new multipolar global order. Western media won't acknowledge as much, but the recent meeting in Moscow between Putin and Xi Jinping was of historical importance. We are witnessing

a global transition in power, and for the common good. Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping bond through an apparent deep sense of mutual respect and wisdom about the political challenges facing today's world. The two leaders have met on more than 20 occasions over the past four years. President Xi referred to Russia as China's foremost ally and said that in a topsy-turvy world the friendship between the two was a source of countervailing stability.

TECHNOLOGY: BANKING & BLOCKCHAIN

Escalating Tensions with North Korea

On the breaking news of North Korea's successful test launch of its first Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM), both Putin and Xi called for calm restraint. By contrast, US President Trump took to Twitter to taunt Kim Jong-Un. "Does this guy not have anything better to do with his life?" said Trump in words that could apply more pertinently to the American president. Then the U.S. and its South Korea ally also launched their ballistic missiles in a military drill aimed as a show of strength to Pyongyang. Kim Jong-Un responded that the ICBM was a gift to Americans on their Fourth of July Independence Day holiday and that there would more such gifts on the way. Rather than escalating tensions, Putin and Xi put forward the eminently reasonable proposal that North Korea should freeze its missile tests and the US should likewise halt its military exercises on the Korean peninsula. All sides must convene in negotiations with a commitment to non-violence and without preconditions to strive for a comprehensive settlement to the decades-old dispute. The contrast in Putin and Xi's dignified, intelligent response with that of Trump's petulance is clear proof of Russia and China showing real global leadership, whereas the Americans are just part of the problem. But the Korean drama was only illustration this week of how American ambitions of unipolar dominance have become redundant.

The Relations Between China and Germany are at Their Historic Best

The G20 summit prelude of Putin hosting Xi in Moscow was followed by the Chinese

president making a state visit to Germany two days before the G20 gathering in Hamburg. Xi and German Chancellor Angela Merkel reportedly signed new trade deals between the world's two leading export economies. Of significance too was the news the same week that the European Union was preparing to finalise a major trade pact with Japan. It is also significant that Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe called on China and Russia to help mediate the Korean crisis immediately following Pyongyang's ICMB test launch.

Evidently, Japan, despite being an ally of Washington, is reaching out to a multilateral solution as proposed by Moscow and Beijing. In so many ways, therefore, whether on matters of security or trade and economy, the world appears to be moving inexorably toward a multipolar format as the most appropriate response to challenges. Not so from the American point of view, especially under Donald Trump's leadership. All nations seem to be nothing more than a footstool for the "exceptional" Americans who feel entitled to hector and browbeat everyone else to get what they want.

Once Dominant, America Find Itself Isolated

America's isolation in the world was glimpsed at the G7 summit earlier this year in May when the other nations awkwardly diverged from Trump on his decision to withdraw the US from the global climate accord. Two months on, the isolation of Washington was even more vivid on the world stage as G20 leaders were gathering in Hamburg.

TECHNOLOGY: BANKING & BLOCKCHAIN

A Bloomberg News headline put it succinctly: ‘Trump risks uniting Cold War allies and foes against him’. Trump’s quest for “America First” through trade protectionism and his narrow-minded unilateralism toward issues of global security have put America out on a limb as far as the rest of the world is concerned. Where is the American “team player”, the supposed “leader of the free world”? All the self-proclaimed virtues are being seen for what they always were: overblown, pretentious and vainglorious bombast.

America is seen as nothing more than a selfish, hulking giant. Its trade imbalances with the rest of the world are not because of “rotten deals”, as Trump would have it, but rather because the American economy has ruined itself over many decades. The offshoring of jobs by American corporations and gutting of American workers with poverty wages are part of it. When America now talks about upholding international law and security, the rest of the world just laughs with bitter irony. The wars across the Middle East and the sponsoring of terrorism are largely US products of criminal regime-change intrigues. Who is this deluded head-case in Washington?

A Multipolar Global Order

The same deluded head-case that has “beautiful chocolate cake” with China’s president in a Florida beach resort, and then proceeds to slap sanctions on China and make provocative military incursions on its territory. It’s not just Trump. It’s the whole American political leadership. The American ruling class has become so blinded by hubris that it can’t even see how

the world it claims to dominate is collectively shutting the door on it and walking away. Washington has no answers for today’s world challenges. Because simply put, Washington is the source of many of today’s problems. It has not even the modesty to acknowledge its responsibility. The only thing the US seems capable of is to make current problems fiendishly worse. The Korean crisis is an object lesson.

Presidents Putin and Xi are not scheming to usurp world domination, as Washington would have us believe. Only in Washington would a vision for a multipolar, more democratic global order be construed as something threatening and sinister. That’s because American ambitions of unipolar “full spectrum dominance” are actually threatening and sinister. The world can be thankful it has genuine leaders in Putin and Xi who are forging ahead to create a multipolar global order. Fortunately, the strategic alliance between Russia and China is underpinned by a formidable military capability. Joint naval exercises this month carried out in the Baltic Sea are a vital insurance policy to back up what Moscow and Beijing are increasingly bold enough to say to the Americans. That message, as Putin and Xi effectively gave to Trump this week, is that American ambitions of world domination are no longer acceptable and no longer tenable. Washington’s days of bullying the world with its moralising hypocrisy and military aggression are over.

CULTURE: RECLAIMING CINEMATIC MASTERPIECES

Erdal Ozdemir

If Hollywood is good at one thing it is monetising mediocre films devoid of meaning, purpose, a storyline, value or acting. Luckily there are many films that defy time and stand as giants in the face of degeneration of cinema by Hollywood. Two such films are L'Eclisse and Solaris.

L'Eclisse (1962) by Michelangelo Antonioni

A visionary film set in the post-war Italy, L'Eclisse is a candid examination of human relationships and clashing concepts of value. A sentimental young woman breaks her relationship with her boyfriend, and while visiting her mother who is obsessed with the stock market, meets and develops a relationship with a trader whose materialistic view of the world clashes with her sentimental view of the world.

Solaris (1972) by Andrei Tarkovsky

A psychologist is despatched to an international space exploration station orbiting a new strange world. The crew of the station experience several paranormal ordeals and the mission control on Earth wants to find out if isolation is driving the

crew to insanity. However the truth couldn't be further than that. Confined to a very limited understanding of various versions of how life can exist, human crew on Solaris realise existence and life can take many different forms.



L'eclisse



Solaris

(Published 2017 CC-BY-SA)

ART: STORIES THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHS

Eylul Dogruel

In this edition of the Kintsugi, we take a trip through stories told in photographs taken by Eylul Dogruel.



Photo: Eylul Dogruel - Icy Road, Iceland. 2017

Twice a week, I post work on my blog Az Bulutlu a new work, usually a photograph. Sometimes it is a work in progress or recently finished piece, other times it is an older photograph that is picked up 15 years later and edited. This back and forth is a way for me to think non-linearly about the work I do, where it was, where it is going, and revisiting

ideas: sometimes finding new ones in result.

This photograph was taken in February 2017 during a trip to Iceland. It is on the way back from Westfjords - where I was at an artist's residency- back to Reykjavík, a trip that takes most of the day by car.

Photo: Eylul Dogruel - Beach in Antalya, Turkey. 2004



It is interesting to edit photographs taken with older digital cameras with much more contemporary tools. Here is one such case, edited after 12 years! I know I photographed this near Antalya, somewhere on the road, from a cliff. The colour of the Mediterranean Sea under bright sunlight is actually this bright.



Eylul Dogruel, is a cross-disciplinary visual artist from Turkey. In addition to photography, she also works with a variety of other materials that includes code, video, animation, drawing. She can be reached on her [website](#), [mastodon](#) or [patreon](#).

Open source software has a bad reputation, which is actually undeserved at least when it comes software for graphics. Part of the problem is the lack of good examples of work created by such software, this has been changing in last couple of years through. For editing this work, I used Darktable, an open sourced non-destructive photo editing software. The original photograph was taken with an android phone as most of my recent photos are. The depth of field is entirely faked in post processing.



Photo: Eylul Dogruel - Somewhere Above Clouds. 2015

(Licence Art Libre 1.3)

TECHNOLOGY: BANKING & BLOCKCHAIN

Badr Berrada



Photo: Carlos Muza

As the struggle to raise profitability continues, innovations like blockchain could offer investment banks a lifeline. Blockchain – a catchall phrase for distributed ledger technology – is a new type of database system which enables multiple parties to share access to the same data, at virtually the same time, with an unprecedented level of confidence.

Faster Banking Transactions

Application of blockchain in banks is materialising into a prospective turbulent force that can transform the financial services industry by making transactions faster, cheaper, more transparent, and

more secure. The banking industry plays an important role in a country's economy by facilitating areas and opportunities to invest beyond cash in hand and also to earn on deposits.

For this, it needs a state-of-the-art, robust infrastructure. Blockchain in banks can make this possible and help deliver more reliable and efficient transactions. Moreover, it can decentralise financial proceedings by creating a tamper-free ledger that records transactions in a public or private peer-to-peer network.

TECHNOLOGY: BANKING & BLOCKCHAIN

All these transaction blocks are linked from the beginning to the end, due to which information cannot be altered in any one block, thus reducing the risk of leaking any data. On the one hand, blockchain enables banks to have faster transactions and prevent online fraud. On the other hand, customers' privacy is compromised coupled with the data duplication issue.

Reducing Operational Costs

IBM is building blockchain technology that will be used by seven of Europe's largest banks, including HSBC and Rabobank, to facilitate international trade for small and medium-size enterprises. The project will mark one of the first real-world use cases of blockchain technology in financial institutions. The potential of blockchain has been praised by the banking industry over the past couple of years, but the first real applications are beginning.

Blockchain can help banks increase the speed of transactions and reduce the cost of activities by automating back-office functions that can later be shared across all banks on the network. Blockchain is decentralised, where the private details of a customer cannot be shared without her permission, thus enabling privacy. It also prevents possibilities of a 'double-spend' by using cryptography; so blocks are formed and then immediately encrypted.

Breaking this encryption is not viable for hackers. Blockchain helps minimise infrastructure costs for banks, the involvement of any middlemen, and the need for transaction fees. For clearing

and final settlements, while Internet transactions can take days, the blockchain can significantly reduce the transaction time to minutes and also offer 24/7 processing.

A Work in Progress

Blockchain promises to provide an online ledger that can store details of a large number of users; and it is next to impossible to hack these details. This appealed to financial institutions in the beginning but soon they realised the difficulties to put it into practice. Although blockchain ensures safe transactions that cannot be reversed, it somehow does not go well with the privacy needs of the secretive bankers who want to use it for purposes other than bitcoin.

Moreover, banks are not quite sure about the scalability of blockchain technology. Since most banks are connected to each other through a central banking system online, they fear about the data being duplicated using a shared settlement system. Blockchain has not only provided a safe and secure platform to transact but has also helped mitigate a lot of other problems, which was not possible before its advent.

However, it still needs to diminish the other challenges, as mentioned above, which are discouraging its adoption. As for banks, they should weigh the benefits and the challenges associated with this technology against their existing landscape to make a decision.

TECHNOLOGY: BANKING & BLOCKCHAIN

What's Next ?

In finance, people rarely lend directly to each other, hence the need for banks as trusted go-betweens. The beauty of cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin or ethereum is that they remove the need for the trusted third party, using instead an encrypted, secure database. This has huge implications for any business that requires the verification of payments and performance of contracts – that is, most businesses. The long-term opportunity for banks is to re-point key operational, risk and finance systems to blockchain-based, shared data platforms. Spending on blockchain in the financial services sector is accelerating, especially at a time when the rising cost of capital is making it hard to increase profitability by traditional methods. IBM is currently building blockchain technology that will be used by seven of Europe's largest banks, including HSBC and Rabobank, to facilitate international trade for small and medium-size enterprises. Everything will be tokenised and connected by a Blockchain one day.

Blockchain could enhance entrepreneurship in developed and developing countries, breaking down barriers built from embedded bureaucracy and corruption by providing a means to bypass existing power structures. For example, the digital ledger Everledger is tracking diamonds to prove their provenance and ownership. As a result, trust in the system is enhanced. When the internet came into being, it was a disruptive, game-changing force for many industries, blockchain technology

holds the same potential. In moving trust from the current “verifiers” to a distributed blockchain system, the world could see a massive shift in power to the masses – a truly revolutionary idea.



Badr Berrada is an Economist. He is also the founder of the BBN Times newspaper and a writer. Banking & Blockchain and A Global Transition in Power were previously featured on the BBN Times.